

Remarks

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7-10, 13-27, 29, 30, and 36-38 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 3, 7-10, 13-15, 18, and 25 have been amended. In addition, Claims 2, 4, 11, and 31-35 have been canceled, and new Claims 36-38 have been added. Support for the amendments to Claims 1 and 15 may be found at least at page 4, paragraph [0016], lines 7-12 in the specification of the present application. Support for the amendments to Claims 10 and 25 may be found at least at page 7, paragraph [0030], pages 10-15 in the specification of the present application. Reconsideration of the pending Claims is respectfully requested in view of the amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

Objections to the Specification

The Office Action mailed April 30, 2009 ("Office Action") objected to the specification alleging that "paragraphs [0001] through [0004] appear to be from a different application and should be replaced." (Office Action, p. 2.) The specification has been amended as indicated in the previous "Amendments to the Specification" to address the objection.

Claim Objections

The Office Action objected to Claim 25 alleging that "'on a computer readable medium' -- should be added after 'includes' on line 5." (Office Action, p. 2.) Claim 25 has been amended to address the objection.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC 102(b)

Claims 1-5, 7, 9-11, 14-22, 25-27, and 31-35 stand rejected pursuant to 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Inoue et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,295,503).

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended to describe:

a processor configured to store a high occupancy vehicle (HOV) restriction value for a section of road and configured to receive information from a plurality of seat occupancy sensors each configured to determine whether a respective seat is occupied, where the information is indicative of a number of occupied seats in the vehicle;

where the processor is configured to receive an input from a user indicative of the number of occupants in the vehicle;

where the processor is configured to compare the information from the plurality of seat sensors to the input from the user;

where the processor is configured to prompt the user to verify the input from the user in response to the comparison of the information from the plurality of seat sensors to the input from the user being indicative of the number of occupants being different from the number of occupied seats;

where the processor is configured to receive the verification of the input from the user;

where the processor is configured to compare the verified input to the HOV restriction value of the section of road; and

where the processor is configured to determine a route as a function of the comparison of the verified input to the HOV restriction value of the section of road.

Inoue fails to each or suggest such features. Inoue describes a navigation system configured to generate a route for a vehicle to a destination based on carpool lane data and a number of passengers in the vehicle. (See Inoue, col. 6, ll. 28-37.) Inoue describes the use of a “passenger

number sensor” to detect a number of passengers riding in a vehicle. (See Inoue, col. 3, ll. 60-63.) Alternatively, Inoue describes allowing a user to input a number of passengers present in the vehicle. (See Inoue, col. 10, ll. 46-57.) However, Inoue fails to describe any “processor” that is “configured to compare information from the plurality of seat sensors to the input from the user” as described in amended Claim 1. Inoue fails to teach or suggest any comparison between output from the “passenger number sensor” and the user input described in Inoue. In fact, the description of Inoue describes these two implementations as alternative to one another and does not describe the implementations as interacting in any manner.

Moreover, Inoue fails to describe “where the processor is configured to prompt the user to verify the input from the user in response to the comparison of the information from the plurality of seat sensors to the input from the user being indicative of the number of occupants being different from the number of occupied seats” as described in amended Claim 1. As previously discussed, Inoue only describes either assessing a number of vehicle passengers based on a “passenger number sensor” or a user input, but fails to teach or suggest and prompting the user for any type of verification of the input of the user.

Furthermore, Inoue fails to teach or suggest a processor “configured to compare the verified input to the HOV restriction value of the section of road . . . to determine a route as a function of the comparison of the verified input to the HOV restriction value of the section of road.” Because Inoue fails to teach or suggest any comparison between a “information from the plurality of seat sensors” and an “input from the user,” it is a logical following that Inoue fails to teach or suggest comparing “the verified input to the HOV restriction value of the section of road” and determining “a route as a function of the comparison of the verified input to the HOV

restriction value of the section of road.” Thus, the Inoue fails to anticipate amended Claim 1. As a result, the rejection of Claim 1 has been rendered moot. As such, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of Claim 1 be withdrawn.

Claims 3 and 5

Amended Claim 3 and Claim 5 are dependent upon amended Claim 1. As a result, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of amended Claim 3 and Claim 5 be withdrawn for at least the reasons discussed with regard to amended Claim 1.

Claim 7

Amended Claim 7 describes a “processor . . . configured to generate a map visually distinguishing the existence of an HOV restriction value for a section of road from at least one section of road without an HOV restriction value and displays the map on the display.” Inoue fails to teach or suggest such features. The Office Action alleges that Inoue teaches a processor that “generates a map indicating the existence of an HOV restriction value for a section of road and displays the map on the display (column 4, lines 1-6; column 6, lines 41-50; the display displays map data inputted from the map data input unit 24, which includes carpool lane data).” (Office Action, p. 4.) The first relied-upon portion of Inoue merely describe “a display unit” that is capable of displaying a “vehicle present position,” “map data inputted” from a “map data input unit, as well as “additional data.” (See Inoue, col. 4, ll. 1-4.) The second relied-upon portion of Inoue describes the manner in which “road network data” is stored to identify particular characteristics of various roads. (See Inoue, col. 6, ll. 41-54.) However, none of the relied-

upon portions or the rest of Inoue teaches or suggests a “map visually distinguishing the existence of an HOV restriction value for a section of road from at least one section of road without an HOV restriction.” Inoue fails to teach or suggest any distinction generated on the “display unit” that visually distinguishes a road including carpool lane restrictions from any roads not having such restrictions. Thus, Inoue fails to anticipate amended Claim 7. As a result, the rejection of Claim 7 has been rendered moot. As such, withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 7 is respectfully requested.

Claim 9

Amended Claim 9 is dependent upon amended Claim 1. As a result, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of amended Claim 9 be withdrawn for at least the reasons discussed with regard to amended Claim 1.

Claim 10

Claim 10 has been amended to describe “a display coupled to the processor, where the processor is configured to generate a map visually indicating the high occupancy vehicle restriction value for the section of road,” “where the processor is configured to determine a plurality of routes from an origin to a destination, where at least one of the routes is based on the comparison of the number of occupants in the vehicle to the high occupancy vehicle restriction value for the section of road” and “where the processor is configured to prompt a user to select one of the plurality of routes.” Inoue fails to teach or suggest such features.

As described with regard to amended Claim 7, Inoue fails to teach or suggest “visually

indicating the high occupancy vehicle restriction for the section of road.” Inoue fails to teach or suggest any manner of visually indicating carpool lane restrictions on the “display unit.”

Moreover, Inoue fails to teach or suggest determining “a plurality of routes from an origin to a where at least one of the routes is based on the comparison of the number of occupants in the vehicle and the high occupancy vehicle restriction value for the section of road” and “where the processor is configured to prompt a user to select one of the plurality of routes.” Inoue describes determining a single route based on “route cost” considerations. (See Inoue, col. 5, ll. 17-31.) However, Inoue does not generate a plurality of routes from an origin to a destination with one of the routes being a function of a number of passengers compared to carpool lane restrictions. As a logical following, Inoue also fails to describe any manner of prompting “a user to select one of the plurality of routes.” Inoue fails to teach or suggest any manner of offering a user selection of routes from a common origin and destination. Thus, Inoue fails to teach or suggest all of the limitations of amended Claim 10. As a result, the rejection of Claim 10 has been rendered moot. As such, Applicant respectfully requests withdraw of the rejection of Claim 10 be withdrawn.

Claim 14

Amended Claim 14 is dependent upon amended Claim 10. As a result, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of amended Claim 14 be withdrawn for at least the reasons discussed with regard to amended Claim 10.

Claim 15

Claim 15 has been amended to describe:

receiving occupancy information from a plurality of occupancy sensors, where each of the occupancy sensors is configured to determine whether a seat in the vehicle is occupied, and where the occupancy information is indicative of a number of occupied seats in the vehicle;

receiving an input from a user, where the input is indicative of a number of occupants in the vehicle;

comparing the occupancy information from the plurality of occupancy sensors to the input from the user;

prompting the user to verify the input when the comparison indicates that the number of occupants is different than the number of occupied seats;

receiving verification of the input from the user; and

determining whether the vehicle is authorized to traverse the section of road based on a comparison of the high occupancy vehicle restriction value to the verified input.

For at least the reasons discussed with regard to amended Claim 1, Inoue fails to teach or suggest “comparing the occupancy information from the plurality of occupancy sensors to the input from the user,” “prompting the user to verify the input when the comparison indicates that the number of occupants is different than the number of occupied seats,” “receiving verification of the input from the user,” and “determining whether the vehicle is authorized to traverse the section of road based on a comparison of the high occupancy vehicle restriction value to the verified input.” Thus, Inoue fails to anticipate amended Claim 15. As a result, the rejection of Claim 15 has been rendered moot. As such, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 15.

Claims 16-22

Claims 16, 17, and 19-22 and amended Claim 18 are dependent upon amended Claim 15.

As a result, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of Claims 16, 17, and 19-22 and amended Claim 18 be withdrawn for at least the reasons discussed with regard to amended Claim 15.

Claim 25

Claim 25 has been amended to describe “instructions to determine a plurality of routes from an origin to a destination, where at least one of the routes is a function of the comparison of the number of occupants in the vehicle to the high occupancy vehicle restriction value for the road” and “instructions to prompt a user to select one of the plurality of routes.” For at least the reasons discussed with regard to amended Claim 10, Inoue fails to teach or suggest such features. Thus, Inoue fails to anticipate amended Claim 25. As a result, the rejection of Claim 25 has been rendered moot. As such, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 25.

Claims 26 and 27

Claims 26 and 27 are dependent upon amended Claim 25. As a result, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of Claims 26 and 27 be withdrawn for at least the reasons discussed with regard to amended Claim 25.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC 103(a)

Claims 8, 23, and 29 stand rejected pursuant to 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Inoue in view of Yamazaki (U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2001/0021895). Claims 13, 24, and 30 stand rejected pursuant to 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Inoue in view of "Traffic sign enabled global positioning system (GPS) based navigation system for vehicles."

Claim 8

Amended Claim 8 is dependent upon amended Claim 1. As a result, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of amended Claim 8 be withdrawn for at least the reasons discussed with regard to amended Claim 1.

Claim 13

Amended Claim 13 is dependent upon amended Claim 10. As a result, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of amended Claim 13 be withdrawn for at least the reasons discussed with regard to amended Claim 10.

Claims 23 and 24

Claims 23 and 24 are dependent upon amended Claim 15. As a result, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of Claim 23 and 24 be withdrawn for at least the reasons discussed with regard to amended Claim 15.

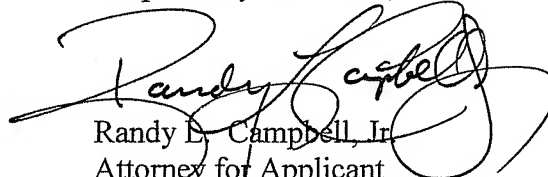
Claims 29 and 30

Claims 29 and 30 are dependent upon amended Claim 25. As a result, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of Claims 29 and 30 be withdrawn for at least the reasons discussed with regard to amended Claim 25.

Conclusion

In view of the amendments to the Claims and the above remarks, the application is now in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner deem a telephone conference to be beneficial in expediting examination and/or allowance of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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